

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully requests further examination and reconsideration in view of the above amendments. Claims 1-26 remain pending in the case. Claims 1-26 are rejected. Claims 1, 8, 15 and 21 are amended herein. No new matter has been added.

35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent 6,028,848 by Bhatia et al., hereinafter referred to as the “Bhatia” reference. Applicants have reviewed the cited reference and respectfully submit that the embodiments of the present invention as recited in Claims 1-26 are not anticipated by Bhatia in view of the following rationale.

Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner to independent Claim 1 that recites that an embodiment of the present invention is directed to (emphasis added):

A method for performing device address assigning functionality in intelligent hardware, said method comprising:
receiving a network access request from an electronic device communicatively coupled to said intelligent hardware;
transmitting a device address request to a network server communicatively coupled to said intelligent hardware;
receiving a first device address from said network server communicatively coupled to said intelligent hardware; and

assigning a second device address to said electronic device communicatively coupled to said intelligent hardware;
wherein said intelligent hardware is wall-mountable and comprises a user-accessible surface such that a user is provided direct access to said intelligent hardware.

Independent Claims 8, 15 and 21 recite similar limitations. Claims 2-7 that depend from independent Claim 1, Claims 9-14 that depend from independent Claim 8, Claims 16-20 that depend from independent Claim 15, and Claims 22-26 that depend from independent Claim 21 provide further recitations of the features of the present invention.

Bhatia and the claimed invention are very different. Applicants understand Bhatia to teach an ISDN LAN modem. In particular, Applicants respectfully assert that Bhatia does not teach, describe or suggest "receiving a network access request from an electronic device communicatively coupled to said intelligent hardware," as claimed. Moreover, Applicants respectfully assert that Bhatia does not teach, describe or suggest that the ISDN LAN modem is "wall-mountable and comprises a user-accessible surface such that a user is provided direct access," as claimed.

Applicants understand Bhatia to teach a LAN modem that automatically adapts itself to the current network environment of a connected workstation. Bhatia teaches that the LAN modem detects the Ethernet address of the workstation to determine the IP address of the workstation through packets

transmitted by the workstation. In particular, Bhatia teaches that the workstation already has access to the network, thus allowing the LAN modem access to the transmitted packets. Accordingly, a network access request is not received at the LAN modem, as workstation already has access to the network. Moreover, the Ethernet address and IP address of the workstation are already determined prior to connecting the LAN modem. While the LAN modem is able to integrate itself into communications between the network and the workstation, the LAN modem does not receive a network access request or transmit such a request to a network server (col. 4, line 52 through col. 5, line 67).

Furthermore, Applicants understand that the LAN modem of Bhatia is not wall-mountable nor user accessible. In particular, Bhatia is silent as to the physical construction or accessibility of the LAN modem. However, Bhatia teaches that the LAN modem may be connected to a number of workstations. Typically, such a LAN modem is located in a wiring closet at some distance from the workstations, which are connected to the LAN modem over network cabling. In particular, the LAN modem is not directly accessible to the user of a workstation. Applicants respectfully assert that Bhatia does not teach that the ISDN LAN modem is "wall-mountable and comprises a user-accessible surface such that a user is provided direct access," as claimed.

In contrast, embodiments of the claimed invention as recited in independent Claims 1 and 8 are directed towards a method for performing device address assigning functionality in intelligent hardware, including “receiving a network access request from an electronic device communicatively coupled to said intelligent hardware” (emphasis added). As described in the current specification, a network access request is a request to communicate with a computer over a network (page 16, line 17 through page 17, line 2). Applicants respectfully assert that the intelligent hardware is thus operable to grant a network access request of a connected electronic device to a network.

Moreover, embodiments of the claimed invention as recited in independent Claims 1, 8, 15 and 21 are directed towards intelligent hardware that is “wall-mountable and comprises a user-accessible surface such that a user is provided direct access to said intelligent hardware,” (emphasis added) as claimed. As described in the current specification, the present invention “can be installed inside of a wall or in internal space provided for in an office cubicle” (page 12, lines 10-14). The intelligent hardware is wall-mountable and provides a user-accessible surface allowing a user to directly connect electronic devices to the intelligent hardware (page 13, lines 16-23; page 14, lines 5-11; Figure 3).

Therefore, Applicants respectfully assert that nowhere does Bhatia teach, disclose or suggest the claimed embodiments of the present invention

as recited in independent Claims 1, 8, 15 and 22, that these claims overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), and are thus in a condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully submit the Bhatia also does not teach or suggest the additional claimed features of the present invention as recited in Claims 2-7 that depend from independent Claim 1, Claims 9-14 that depend from independent Claim 8, Claims 16-20 that depend from independent Claim 15, and Claims 22-26 that depend from independent Claim 21. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 2-7, 9-14, 16-20 and 22-26 overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), and are in a condition for allowance as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejected claims. Based on the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully assert that Claims 1-26 overcome the rejections of record and, therefore, Applicants respectfully solicit allowance of these Claims. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,

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- 14 -

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